

1 **WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method for displaying an advertisement in an electronic program guide (EPG) comprising the steps of:

5 storing television schedule information in a database; receiving advertisement information; combining a portion of the received advertisement information with a portion of the stored television schedule information; and

10 displaying the combined information in the EPG on a screen.

15 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiving, combining, and displaying steps are performed in substantially real time.

20 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiving step comprises receiving promotional information about a future television program.

25 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiving step comprises receiving promotional information about a currently telecast television program.

25 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the receiving step comprises receiving promotional information about one or more of a product and a service.

30 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step comprises storing a program description and the combining step comprises combining a portion of the received advertisement information with the stored program description.

35 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step comprises storing a program telecast time and the combining step

1 comprises combining a portion of the received advertisement
information with the stored program telecast time.

5 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step
comprises storing a web site address and the combining step
comprises combining a portion of the received advertisement
information with the stored web site address.

10 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step
comprises storing information related to a geographical location
and the combining step comprises combining a portion of the
received advertisement information with the information related
to a geographical location.

15 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step
comprises storing information related to a television viewer and
the combining step comprises combining a portion of the received
advertisement information with the information related to a
television viewer.

20 25 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing step
comprises storing information related to rotating advertisement
information in the EPG and the combining step comprises combining
a portion of the received advertisement information with the
information related to rotating advertisement information.

30 12. The method of claim 11 further comprising displaying
the advertisement information in the EPG based on the rotating
information.

35 13. The method of claim 3, wherein the promotional
information is a video preview related to the future television
program.

1 14. The method of claim 5, wherein the promotional information is a video preview related to the one or more of a product and a service.

5 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of selecting the displayed information using a pointing device and activating a function related to the selected information.

10 16. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of activating a function comprises linking to a web site based on an address related to the selected information and displaying more information from the web site.

15 17. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of activating a function comprises displaying more detail information related to the selected information.

20 18. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of activating a function comprises scheduling a future television program for recording.

25 19. The method of claim 15, wherein the step of activating a function comprises tuning to a currently telecast television program.

20 20. A method for modifying an advertisement in an electronic program guide (EPG) comprising the steps of:
 storing television schedule information in a first database;
 storing advertisement information in a second database;
30 incorporating a portion of the television schedule information from the first database into a portion of the advertisement information to form a modified advertisement; and
 displaying the modified advertisement on a screen.

1 21. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing
advertisement information step comprises storing promotional
information about a future television program.

5 22. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing
advertisement information step comprises storing promotional
information about a currently telecast television program.

10 23. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing
advertisement information step comprises storing promotional
information about one or more of a product and a service.

15 24. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing schedule
information step comprises storing a program description and the
incorporating step comprises incorporating a portion of the
received advertisement information with the stored program
description.

20 25. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing schedule
information step comprises storing a program telecast time and
the incorporating step comprises incorporating a portion of the
stored advertisement information with the stored program telecast
time.

25 26. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing schedule
information step comprises storing a web site address and the
incorporating step comprises incorporating a portion of the
stored advertisement information with the stored web site
address.

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27. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing schedule
information step comprises storing information related to a
geographical location and the incorporating step comprises
incorporating a portion of the stored advertisement information
35 with the information related to a geographical location.

1 28. The method of claim 20, wherein the storing schedule
information step comprises storing information related to a
television viewer and the incorporating step comprises
incorporating a portion of the received advertisement information
5 with the information related to a television viewer.

2 29. The method of claim 1, wherein the storing schedule
information step comprises storing information related to
rotating advertisement information in the EPG and the
10 incorporating step comprises incorporating a portion of the
stored advertisement information with the information related to
rotating advertisement information.

3 30. The method of claim 29 further comprising displaying
15 the advertisement information in the EPG based on the rotating
information.

4 31. The method of claim 21, wherein the promotional
information is a video preview related to the future television
20 program.

5 32. The method of claim 23, wherein the promotional
information is a video preview related to the one or more of a
product and a service.

25 33. The method of claim 20 further comprising the steps of
selecting the displayed advertisement using a pointing device and
activating a function related to the selected advertisement.

30 34. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of activating
a function comprises linking to a web site based on an address
related to the selected advertisement and displaying more
information from the web site.

1 35. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of activating
a function comprises displaying more detail information related
to the selected advertisement.

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36. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of activating
a function comprises displaying a video preview related to the
selected advertisement.

10 37. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of activating
a function comprises scheduling a future television program for
recording.

15 38. The method of claim 33, wherein the step of activating
a function comprises tuning to a currently telecast television
program.

20 39. An interactive electronic program guide (EPG) system
comprising:

25 a first database for storing television schedule
information;

a second database for storing advertisement data, wherein
a portion of the information stored in the first database is
combined with a portion of an advertisement data associated in
25 the second database to form an updated advertisement; and

30 a display screen for displaying the updated advertisement
in the EPG.

40. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the advertisement data is
30 promotional information about a future television program.

41. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the advertisement data is
promotional information about a currently telecast television
program.

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1 42. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the advertisement data is
promotional information about one or more of a product and a
service.

5 43. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the first database
includes a program description for combining a portion of the
advertisement data with the stored program description.

10 44. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the first database
includes a program telecast time for combining a portion of the
advertisement data with the stored program telecast time.

15 45. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the first database
includes a web site address for combining a portion of the
advertisement data with the stored web site address.

20 46. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the first database
includes geographical location data for combining a portion of
the advertisement data with the stored geographical location
data.

25 47. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the first database
includes information related to a television viewer for combining
a portion of the advertisement data with the information related
to a television viewer.

30 48. The EPG of claim 39, wherein the first database
includes information related to rotating advertisement
information in the EPG for combining a portion of the
advertisement data with the information related to rotating
advertisement information.

35 49. The EPG of claim 40, wherein the promotional
information is a video preview related to the future television
program.

1 50. The EPG of claim 42, wherein the promotional
information is a video preview related to the one or more of a
product and a service.

5 51. The EPG of claim 39 further comprising an input device
for selecting the displayed advertisement and activating a
function related to the selected advertisement.

10 52. The EPG of claim 51, wherein the input device activates
a function to link to a web site based on an address related to
the selected advertisement.

15 53. The EPG of claim 51, wherein the input device activates
a function to display more detail information related to the
selected advertisement.

20 54. The EPG of claim 51, wherein the input device activates
a function to schedule a future television program for recording.

25 55. The EPG of claim 51, wherein the input device activates
a function to tune to a currently telecast television program.

56. The EPG of claim 51, wherein the input device activates
a function to display a video preview related to the selected
25 advertisement.

57. A computer readable medium having stored thereon a set
of instructions including instruction for displaying an
advertisement in an electronic program guide (EPG), the
30 instructions, when executed by a microprocessor, cause the
microprocessor to perform the steps of:

storing television schedule information in a database;
receiving advertisement information;

1 combining a portion of the received advertisement
information with a portion of the stored television schedule
information; and

5 displaying the combined information in the EPG on a screen.

10 58. A computer readable medium having stored thereon a set
of instructions including instruction for modifying an
advertisement in an electronic program guide (EPG), the
instructions, when executed by a microprocessor, cause the

15 microprocessor to perform the steps of:

storing television schedule information in a first database;

storing advertisement information in a second database;

incorporating a portion of the television schedule
information from the first database into a portion of the
15 advertisement information to form a modified advertisement; and

displaying the modified advertisement on a screen.

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